

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DHAHRA 00910 021310Z
ACTION NEA-10

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AMEMBASSY LONDON
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UNCLAS DHAHRAN 0910

E.O. 11652: MQXA
TAGS: CASC, CPAS, BGEN, SA
SUBJECT: COMMERCIAL DISPUTE AND DETENTION OF TWO AMCIT EMPLOYEES
OF US COMPANY

REF: (A) DHAHRAN 0860 (NOTAL), (B) STATE 173028 (NOTAL),
(C) STATE 178692 (NOTAL)

1. AS REPORTED IN REFTTEL, ABDULLAH AL-KHODARI RETURNED AND MEETING BETWEEN HIM AND APO WAS ARRANGED FOR AUGUST 1. AT BEGINNING OF MEETING AL-KHODARI ADVISED THAT HE HAS NO REASON TO PREVENT THE TWO SUMMIT EMPLOYEES FROM LEAVING SAUDI ARABIA. HE THEN INSTRUCTED STAFF MEMBER TO MOVE AHEAD WITH NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS TO DELIVER PASSPORTS TO THE TWO AMCITS TOGETHER WITH APPROPRIATE PAPERS TO PERMIT THEM TO OBTAIN EXIT VISAS FROM SAG AUTHORITIES. ONE PASSPORT, HOWEVER, REMAINS IN AR'AR AND AL-KHODARI PROMISED TO QUICKLY RECOVER TRAVEL DOCUMENT AND DELIVER IT TO AMCIT. ON JULY 30 AN ATTEMPT HAD BEEN MADE BY SAUDI COMPANY TO PICK UP PASSPORT IN AR'AR BUT AIRCRAFT SENT ON ERRAND DEVELOPED ENGINE TROUBLE AND HAD TO RETURN.

2. DECISION TO RELEASE AMCIT PASSPORTS RELATED TO FACT THAT AL-KHODARI (WHO HAD BEEN OUT OF COUNTRY IN RECENT UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 DHAHRA 00910 021310Z

WEEKS) WAS AVAILABLE TO MAKE DECISION THAT ONLY HE HAD POWER TO MAKE AND, SECONDLY, POST HAD GENTLY NUDGED SAUDI COMPANY TO RELEASE PASSPORTS BEFORE MATTER HAD TO BE ESCALATED TO EMBASSY LEVEL AND APPROACHES MADE TO SAG. ALSO, AL-KHODARI RECOGNIZED THAT HIS PROBLEM WAS WITH OWNER OF SUMMITAND THAT SUMMIT'S EMPLOYEES WERE INNOCENT PAWNS IN MATTER. CREDIT MUST ALSO GO TO TWO AMCIT EMPLOYEES

OF SUMMIT THEMSELVES WHO ACTED IN GENTLEMENLY AND HELPFUL FASHION THROUGHOUT AND, THEREFORE, NEVER AGGREGATED DIFFICULT SITUATION.

3. AL-KHODALZ'S ONLY CONDITION REGARDING RELEASE OF AMCIT PASSPORTS WAS TO ASK POST'S ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING MEETING BETWEEN SUMMIT'S OWNER, LAWRENCE ISGETTE AND HIMSELF. CONTRACTOR NOTED THAT HE WAS PLANNING TO RETURN TO EUROPE AND WILL BE IN LONDON FROM AUGUST 9 TO 16. HE REFERRED TO ISGETTE'S MESSAGE OF JULY 22 (SEE PARA 2 OF REF B) AND ASKED MEETING WITH ISGETTE BE ARRANGED. HE ANTICIPATES HE WILL BE STAYING AT CHURCHILL HOTEL OR THE ATHENIAN HOTEL (OFF PICADILLY) IN LONDON. HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF HE COULD RECEIVE ISGETTE'S REPLY BEFORE LEAVING SAUDI ARABIA. WHEN DISCUSSING FOREGOING WITH ISGETTE, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO NOTE THAT AL-KHODARI SEEMS GENUINELY INTERESTED IN NEGOTIATING SETTLEMENT AND READY TO COMPROMISE HIS DIFFERENCES WITH ISGETTE.

4. COMMENT: INASMUCH AS ISGETTE, IN REF B, STATED HE IS WILLING TO MEET AL-KHODARI "IN LONDON AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE", IT SHOULD BE STRAIGHTFORWARD S TTTER#FOR DEPARTMENT TO SET

UP MEETING. POST PLEASED THAT AL-KHODARI HAS BEEN SO FORTHCOMING ON MATTER OF AMCIT PASSPORTS AND IS WILLING TO ACCEDE TO ISGETTE'S REQUEST FOR LONDON MEETING. HOPE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 DHAHRA 00910 021310Z

THAT ISGETTE WILL QUICKLY AGREE TO MEET WITH AL-KHODARI MIDDLE OF AUGUST IN LONDON AND SEEK TO BRING TO AN END AN UNPLEASANT CHAPTER IN OUR COMMERCIAL RELATIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA.
LUCIUS

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED

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